

stand with the other three services and be recognized as a separate service.

With that, Madam Speaker, I ask God to please continue to bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God, in his loving arms, to hold the families who have given a child dying in Afghanistan or Iraq. And I close by asking God to please continue to bless America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. CLARKE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DREIER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. REICHERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. REICHERT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BOOZMAN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DEMOCRACY IN BELARUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, democracy and the rule of law is something that we have cherished in this country for over 200 years. And it is part of our responsibility to not only strengthen and preserve that in our country, but support those countries who are fighting for democracy and freedom.

Many of you may be thinking that this talk is about Iraq and Afghanistan. It is not. It is addressing the last dictatorship in Europe, which I am fortunate to have a relationship with based upon a niche I have developed in working with former captive nations and Eastern European countries.

The country of Belarus has been in a dictatorship for many years. And I am here today to call attention to the arrest two nights ago of an opposition leader, Vintsuk Vyachorka, by the KGB police. Yes, the Belarusian police still go by the KGB, under the direction of the Belarusian dictator, Alexander Lukashenka.

Vintsuk Vyachorka was pulled from his home in the middle of the night, only to be brought up on non-existent charges that will likely land him in jail for at least 25 days.

Madam Speaker, it is my belief, along with many others who have been monitoring the unraveling civil liberties of Belarus, that this arrest is merely the beginning of a series of arrests that the dictator, Mr. Lukashenka, is going to try to use to intimidate opposition leaders into abandoning a large protest on March 25 in honor of Belarusian freedom.

I say that we need to stand together today and say that we will not sit by and watch idly as Mr. Lukashenka uses his power to intimidate and scare the Belarusian people.

I am holding up a wrist bracelet, and many kids have been wearing these now in the United States for a couple of years. It is very simple. In Belarus, you can get arrested for wearing this. In fact, young people are pulled off the streets, intimidated and harassed. So today I bring this on the floor to show

my solidarity with the Belarusian people, for those who are seeking freedom, a return to democracy and the rule of law.

I will not be silent, and I know the world community will not be silent until the last dictatorship in Europe changes its ways and becomes a democracy and enters the community of free, democratic countries in Europe.

CHEMICAL FACILITY SECURITY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Chemical Facility Security Improvement Act of 2007.

It is my hope that this act will improve upon the current legislation authorizing the Department of Homeland Security to regulate security practices at the Nation's chemical facilities.

On October 5, 2006, H.R. 5441, FY07 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act became law (P.L. 109-295). Section 550 of that bill granted the Department of Homeland Security the authority to promulgate interim regulations for chemical facility security.

Although not required for interim regulations, the Department put out an Advance Notice of Rulemaking and requested public comments. Parts of the proposed regulations caused concern, prompting comments from myself and several of my colleagues in Congress. The intention of this bill is to address four areas of concern: Preemption of State laws, use of specific security measures, information protection, and private rights of action.

The most concerning piece of the proposed regulation occurred when the Department decided to go far beyond congressional intent and assert the right of the Secretary to preempt any State or local law; H.R. 5441 was silent on the issue of preemption of State laws, and other major chemical security legislation considered in the 109th Congress—specifically H.R. 5695 and S. 2145—protected State laws from preemption in most cases.

This bill will protect State laws by allowing no Federal funds to be used to approve a site security plan unless the facility meets or exceeds security standards established by the State or local government.

H.R. 5441 restricted the Secretary from requiring the use of any particular security measure. The use of specific security measures could, however, prove necessary to lower the risk posed to and by the chemical facility in certain cases. This bill removes this restriction and would allow the Secretary to require the use of specific security measures where necessary.

According to the proposed regulations, the Department seeks to create a new class of security information called Chemical-Terrorism Vulnerability Information (CVI). The creation of new classes of protected information is not desirable, and this bill would require Vulnerability Assessments and Site Security Plans to be treated as Sensitive Security Information (SSI). SSI is the same information classification currently used for Vulnerability Assessments and Site Security Plans required by the Coast Guard under the Maritime Transportation Security Act, under which chemical facilities located at ports are currently regulated.